
Appendix

Marketing Plan FY 2016-2017

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WEBSITE PLAN

Goals

- Improve quality and amount of compelling content
- Increase number of visitors to website
- Increase visitor time on website
- Increase number of “events” aka downloads of content
- Increase views of online travel guide

Strategy

- Improve quality and amount of compelling content by weaving the “Have the Time of Your Life” theme throughout the website
- Total website SEO optimized via rebuild
- Keyword Research - Define strongest and most popular keyword search terms and phrases and incorporate into all content
- Develop more itinerary-based content
- Encourage stakeholders to add RCTDA website link and online travel guide link to their websites
- Teach stakeholders how to claim and update Trip Advisor, Yelp and Google+ listings and encourage them to do so; host TDA Coffee Meetings to showcase; this will benefit them when visitors use geo-locate and/or geo-target results
- Look for other online partners to help increase traffic (ie: Blue Ridge Mountain Host, Blue Ridge National Heritage Association, Blue Ridge Parkway Association, and large tourism destinations like possibly Biltmore.com)

Domains

Owned Domains

- TimeOfYourLifeNC.com – use with all TOYL related content
- VisitBlueRidgeNC.com – use as main tourism website domain
- VisitNCBlueRidge.com – use for print ad domain address
- TravelBlueRidgeNC.com – use for digital ad domain address
- OurHometownHolidays.com – use for holiday ads and marketing

Purchase additional, available domains for town-specific marketing

- VisitForestCityNC.com
- VisitLakeLureNC.com

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- VisitSpindaleNC.com
 - VisitRutherfordtonNC.com
 - VisitBosticNC.com
 - VisitChimneyRockNC.com
 - All of these domains are available as of 5/31/16

Content & Engagement

Content has to lure readers to your page and then keep them engaged long enough to see what all you have to offer and convince them to visit. The following items aim to do this in several different ways:

- More videos
- Curated itineraries
 - Nature Lover
 - Adventure
 - Romance
 - Girlfriend Getaways
 - Guys Weekend Out
 - Family Fun (Tots and Teens)
 - By cities
 - By regions
- Landing Pages
 - Newsletter
 - Sweepstakes
 - TIEC Visitors
 - Regional Attractions
- Guest bloggers/visitor blogs

SEO

- Enhance SEO across the board through rebuild
- Keyword Research - Define strongest and most popular keyword search terms and phrases and incorporate into all content
- Include LLBRF, Rutherford County, and other keywords in all partner listing descriptions
- Improve page title and description content to enhance SEO
- Incorporate Open Graph support
- Online listings: For listings outside of the RCTDA website, define how the listings for LLBRF and the welcome centers in Lake Lure and Rutherfordton should be listed to ensure consistency across all channels

Stakeholders/External

- Encourage stakeholders to add RCTDA website link and online travel guide link to their websites
- Teach stakeholders how to claim and update Trip Advisor, Yelp and Google+ listings and encourage them to do so; host TDA Coffee Meetings to showcase; this will benefit them when visitors use geo-locate and/or geo-target results
- Look for other online partners to help increase traffic (ie: Blue Ridge Mountain Host, Blue Ridge National Heritage Association, Blue Ridge Parkway Association, and large tourism destinations like possibly Biltmore.com)

Tagging

- Using keywords from keyword research, tag photos, content, and videos through tagging so we can pull experience based on highly searchable tags

Social Media

- Incorporate social media feeds into website
- Trip Advisor – showcase reviews and ratings within website, encourage reviews

Advertisements

- Options within site (banner ads, sponsored content, newsletter feature)

Measurements

- Improved reporting to showcase mobile impact

ADVERTISING PLAN

Goals

- Use a combination of digital and traditional advertising methods to drive more visitors to the RCTDA website and to Rutherford County
- Leverage the awareness of Lake Lure and the marketing dollars invested by Chimney Rock State Park
- Capitalize on the popularity of “Dirty Dancing” and incorporate the “Have the Time of Your Life” theme into all ad placements
- Partner with stakeholders to maximize resources

Strategy

- Implement more digital ads than traditional print advertising
- Leverage awareness of Lake Lure through logo placement on ads
- To capitalize on the popularity of “Dirty Dancing,” incorporate the “Have the Time of Your Life” theme into all ad placements
- Push heavy campaign advertising during the airing of “Dirty Dancing” remake
- Weave “the lift” or “Dirty Dancing” inspired moments into as many visual opportunities as possible. For example:
 - “The lift” photo by Our State Magazine photographer
 - “The lift” at the Hot Nights, Cool Rides festival
 - “The lift” in downtown Forest City’s Christmas lights
 - “Have the Time of Your Life” at KidSenses
- Offer a media buy plan with co-ops for stakeholders to buy into, which gives stakeholders added exposure for fewer dollars and gives RCTDA more budget dollars to secure more/larger placements
- See RCTDA proposed Media Buy plan

Digital Ads

Facebook Boosts and Ads

- Create a boost and ad buy schedule based on campaign themes and rotate towns and assets featured
- Look for more general messages and creative ways to stimulate visitor interest while building messages around RCTDA assets
- Build ads that offer valuable information, tips, how-to’s to potential visitors
 - 6 Must-See Western North Carolina Towns (Chimney Rock, Lake Lure, Rutherfordton, Spindale, Forest City and Bostic)
 - 5 Kid-Friendly Water Adventures in Western North Carolina (Beach at Lake Lure, Canopy Ridge Farm, Lake Lure Adventure Company, Beach at Rumbling Bald Resort, Riverwalk in Chimney Rock Village)

Google AdWords

- More expensive digital option
- Use to funnel people searching for vacations to Asheville and Blue Ridge Mountains or people planning visits to Tryon International Equestrian Center
- Use in conjunction with a powerful call-to-action (CTA) like encouraging travel guide downloads, lodging at nearby attractions like Biltmore or TIEC, signature events, etc.
- Drive people to download online travel guide

Instagram Ads

Instagram is owned by Facebook allowing for easy implementation of joint ads using Facebook and Instagram or for individual ads with only Instagram

Sponsored Content

- For all traditional print ads, incorporate an online “sponsored content” component through an e-newsletter or website placement
- Creates custom content that is linkable to the RCTDA website

Ad Schedule

Facebook Ads Plan

- Boosting 1-2 posts per week to new audience
- Create one ad per week to new audience
- See “Marketing Calendar” on page 13

Social Media Campaign Schedule

- Create weekly Facebook Ad to run for 3 days
- Boost one post per week or use smaller dollar amounts to boost more posts to different audiences per post

Google AdWords Plan

- Set budget for use of Google AdWords as they relate to definite call to action items (ie: downloading travel guide, lodging near TIEC, sign up for travel deals, etc.)
- Do seasonal AdWords campaign targeted at overnight travelers with lodging reservations as the ultimate goal

Traditional Ads

- Target affordable media options within the 5-hour drive market
- Seek opportunities for multiple placements with an online counterpart

Types of Media To Target

Look at placements in the following media and organizations that match audience demographics, interests and target markets of LLBRF (based on budget):

Regional Magazines Examples

- AAA Go Carolinas
- AARP
- Atlanta Magazine
- Blue Ridge Country
- Blue Ridge Outdoors
- Carolina Country Magazine
- Charleston Magazine
- Our State Magazine
- SC Now
- WNC Magazine

Digital Influencer

- RomanticAsheville.com
- OnlyInYourState.com

Special Production Offers

- Best of the Carolinas 2016 TV Production

Tourism Focused Organizations

- VisitNC
- Blue Ridge Parkway Association
- Blue Ridge Mountain Host
- Blue Ridge National Heritage Association
- Tryon International Equestrian Center

Other Outlets

- Interstate billboard placements
- Regional travel guides
- Magic 98.9FM radio for holiday promotion during Christmas

TDA Internal Advertising

- Offer website ads and sponsored content on RCTDA website
- Offer stakeholder advertising in RCTDA welcome center
 - Featured displays

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- Promo videos

Measurement

- Give print and digital ads a dedicated URL to measure drive to website
- Monitor website traffic on Google Analytics from dedicated URLs
- Continue use of online surveys and include a question where visitors can check off if they have seen ads in any of them

SOCIAL MEDIA PLAN

Goals

- Increase user engagement beyond Likes across all channels
- Incorporate more user-generated content
- Use social media to drive more visitors to the RCTDA website
- Focus content more on experiences

Strategy

- Implement more video and engaging photography that show people “having the time of their lives” in Lake Lure & the Blue Ridge Foothills as opposed to scenic shots void of people
- Incorporate more user-generated content by inviting audience to share photos/videos and holding regular photo/video contests
- Incorporate more user-generated content by showcasing a social media RSS feed on the RCTDA website that pulls keywords and hashtags about RCTDA stakeholders, towns and places
- Add social media boards components to all press releases
- Link social media posts back to website as often as possible without coming across like an advertisement or sales pitch by incorporate links to dynamic, useful content
- Incorporate more Tips, Lists, Real People Experiences and Testimonials
- Track social chatter of RCTDA towns by doing regular searches for each one and sharing/reposting great audience posts
- Add SnapChat account to target more millennials

Facebook Data & Audiences

- Based on 7.2K average monthly active people
- **Gender**
 - 80% Women; 20% Men
- **Lifestyle**
 - 10% Apple Pie Families: upper middle-class couples with school-aged children
 - 5% split between 27 additional Lifestyle types showcasing a large variety of audience types
 - 65% of audience is married, 20% single
 - 65% went to college
 - 65% use both mobile AND desktop; 30% use mobile only
 - 75% own their home
 - 35% make between \$50,000 and \$70,000; 25% make between \$75,000 and \$125,000 household income

- **Top Cities Outside of Rutherford County**

- Charlotte, NC
- Asheville, NC
- Gastonia, NC
- Raleigh, NC
- Shelby, NC
- Gaffney, SC
- Inman, SC
- Nashville, TN

- **Purchase Behavior**

- 90% like Food & Drink
- 85% use subscription services
- 75% spend on clothing
- 50% spend on Health & Beauty and Household Products

- **When Fans are online**

- Best times of user engagement are between 7pm – 9pm, but the audience is overall fairly balanced across the entire day

- **Post Types**

- Fans respond to video the most, with an average reach of more than 5,000; shared video comes in second with an average reach of nearly 2,000 per post
- For engagement, shared videos (184) just barely surpass video posts
- Videos also stimulate the most comments, reactions and shares
- Photos and links are evenly in third place
- Status posts with no videos, photos or links have zero to little traffic and should not be continued

Social Media Outlets

Facebook/Twitter

- Designated, scheduled posts for each day of the week:
 - Mondays: Specials/Discounts/Contests #TOYLgetaways #TOYLdeals
 - Tuesdays: #TOYL or event promos or video push #TOYLevents
 - Wednesdays: Dining/Shopping
 - Thursdays: #TBT or #TOYL
 - Fridays/Saturdays/Sundays: Scenic beauty, things to do
- Additional “live” posts to supplement
- Boost one post per week to different audiences
 - Develop lists of audiences each month to match scheduled Facebook content

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- Increase Audience Engagement
 - Search for posts on each town and repost/share

YouTube

- Create more 11-15 second promo videos for each seasonal campaign
- Develop RFP and seek qualified, talented and affordable video company to produce entire series of videos.
- Follow the experience – video people experiencing these activities and campaigns in the master content calendar

Instagram

- Only exceptional photography
- Showcase experiences that visitors will want to emulate
- Incorporate more YouTube videos
- Aim for 2-3x posts per week

Pinterest

- Increase number of pins, likes and engagement on boards
- Create a schedule of posting content to boards – follow Social Media Campaign Schedule where relevant (see below)
- Create/use a board that corresponds to each piece of content that is disseminated
- Link back to website content, not just sharing photos to boards
- Share pins to Facebook and create cross-channels of social media sharing
- ie: Weddings
 - Use weddings blog from website as main content
 - Create board for photos to accompany this blog
 - Take photos of all stakeholders featured in the blog
 - Link all photos back to the blog

SnapChat

- Becoming increasingly popular, especially among millennial audience
- Create filters that play on campaign themes (ie: Dirty Dancing, TOYL filters)

Hashtags

- Incorporate #TOYL as the master hashtag to support the “Have the Time of Your Life” campaign
- Develop hashtags for each campaign that play off of the #TOYL theme
 - #TOYLfall
 - #TOYLsummer
 - #TOYLholidays
 - #TOYLSweepstakes

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- #TOYLdeals
 - #TOYLevents

Social Media Campaign Schedule

- Pull curated content based on daily social media focus; replicate across all relevant channels
- Live post as applicable to augment page content and engagement
- Link back to blogs, press releases or other website content to drive visitor traffic back to website
- Plug in posts for all holidays and special celebrations

For a full schedule see “Marketing Calendar” on page 13.

MARKETING CALENDAR

Quarterly & Monthly Sample Calendar

Quarterly Calendar

		Quarterly Items	Bi-Weekly Items	Monthly Items	Daily Items/Social Media	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions	Upcoming Events	Deals/Discounts	Dining or Shopping	#TBT or #TOYL	Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions	Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions
	Video of the Week	Weekly Contest	Monthly Press Release	Upcoming Event		
	Write All Ad Copy	Monthly Sweepstakes	Bi-Weekly Blog			
	Facebook Boost/Ad	Request Ad Designs				
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions	Upcoming Events	Deals/Discounts	Dining or Shopping	#TBT or #TOYL	Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions	Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions
	Video of the Week	Weekly Contest	Quarterly Visitor Enews	Upcoming Event		
	Compile Analytics Data		Qtrly Events Release			
	Compile Impressions					
	Facebook Boost/Ad					
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions	Upcoming Events	Deals/Discounts	Dining or Shopping	#TBT or #TOYL	Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions	Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions
	Video of the Week	Weekly Contest	Bi-Weekly Blog	Upcoming Event		
	Request Qtrly Artwork			TDA Board Meeting		
	Facebook Boost/Ad					
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions	Upcoming Events	Deals/Discounts	Dining or Shopping	#TBT or #TOYL	Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions	Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions
	Video of the Week	Weekly Contest		Upcoming Event		
	Stakeholder eNews					
	Facebook Boost/Ad					
28	29	30	31			
Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions	Upcoming Events	Deals/Discounts	Dining or Shopping	#TBT or #TOYL	Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions	Scenery, Things to Do or Attractions
	Video of the Week	Weekly Contest	Bi-Weekly Blog	Upcoming Event		
	Quarterly Campaign Transition					
	Facebook Boost/Ad					